

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An information processing device comprising:

a display unit whose display brightness level is changeable, the display brightness level having a plurality of display brightness levels, a difference between the brightness levels adjacent thereto being predetermined;

means for detecting the lightness of surroundings;

means for determining a target display brightness level of the display unit responsive to the lightness detected by the means for detecting the lightness; and

means for changing the display brightness level of the display unit incrementally with time in steps until the display brightness level of the display device reaches the target display brightness level ~~is reached~~ when changing the display brightness level to the target display brightness level determined by the means for determining the target display brightness level.

2. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 1, wherein the means for changing the display brightness level further includes means for instantly changing the display brightness level to the brightness level determined by the means for determining the target display brightness level when the lightness is changed and means for deciding whether to switch the brightness level change by the means for instantly changing.

3. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 1, ~~further comprising: wherein~~

the means for changing the display brightness level includes means for setting the display brightness level of the display unit to a first brightness level responsive to the means

for detecting the lightness when a first lightness level is detected by the means for detecting the lightness and to a second brightness level when a second lightness level is detected by the means for detecting the lightness, ~~wherein and~~

the means for ~~first~~ changing the display brightness level first changes the display brightness level of the display unit from the first brightness level to a third brightness level between the first and second brightness levels, and then changes the display brightness level thereof from the third brightness level to the second brightness level responsive to the means for setting the display brightness level when changing the display brightness level from the first brightness level to the second brightness level.

4. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 3, wherein the means for changing the display brightness level includes means for instantly changing the display brightness level to the brightness level determined by the means for determining the target display brightness level when the lightness is changed and means for deciding whether to switch the brightness level change by the means for instantly changing.

5. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 3, wherein the means for changing the display brightness level changes the display brightness level of the display unit from the first brightness level to the third brightness level, and thereafter changes the display brightness level from the third brightness level to the second brightness level after a lapse of a predetermined time period.

6. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 5, wherein the means for changing the display brightness level includes means for instantly changing the display brightness level to the brightness level determined by the means for determining the target display brightness level when the lightness is changed and means for deciding whether to switch the brightness level change by the means for instantly changing.

7. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for deciding whether or not the difference between the target brightness level determined by the means for determining the target display brightness level and the current display brightness level is greater than a predetermined value, wherein

the means for changing the display brightness level changes the display brightness level ~~in steps~~ incrementally with time at regular predetermined intervals until the target display brightness level is reached when the means for deciding the difference decides that the difference is greater than the predetermined value.

8. (Currently Amended) The information processing device according to claim 5, wherein when the difference is not greater than the predetermined value, the means for changing the display brightness level changes instantly the display brightness level of the display unit to the brightness level determined by the means for determining the target display brightness level.

9. (Currently Amended) A brightness control method of an information processing device having a display unit whose display brightness level is changeable, the display brightness level having a plurality of display brightness levels, a difference between the brightness levels adjacent thereto being predetermined, the brightness control method comprising:

detecting a lightness of surroundings;

determining the target display brightness level of the display unit in accordance with the detected lightness; and

changing the display brightness level of the display unit ~~in steps~~ incrementally with time until the display brightness level of the display unit reaches the target display brightness level ~~is reached~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The brightness control method according to claim 9, further comprising:

setting the display brightness level of the display unit to a first brightness level when a first lightness level is detected; and

setting the display brightness level of the display unit to a second brightness level when a second lightness level is detected, wherein

the changing the display brightness level changes the display brightness level thereof first from the first brightness level to a third brightness level between the first and second brightness levels and then changes the display brightness level thereof from the third brightness level to the second brightness level.

11. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein the display brightness level of the display unit is changed from the first brightness level to the third brightness level, and thereafter the display brightness level is changed from the third brightness level to the second brightness level after a lapse of a predetermined time period.

12. (Currently Amended) The brightness control method according to claim 9, further comprising:

deciding whether or not the difference between the target brightness level and the current display brightness level is greater than a predetermined value, wherein

the changing the display brightness level includes changing the display brightness level of the display unit ~~in steps~~ incrementally with time at regular intervals until the target display brightness level is reached when the difference is greater than the predetermined value.